

# The Parish VISITOR



*"Be Transformed...By the renewing of your minds." - Romans 12:2 - NIV*

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
4011 Clinton St., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298  
The REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY, Pastor

cpchollywood.org

JANUARY

2024

VOL. LXXV111 NO. 1



*your pastor writes*

By REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY



Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to all our *Parish Visitor* readers. The following is a message I gave during Advent. I pray it will bless you.

*How God Moves in History*, Luke 1:26-38, originally give on 121723 at CPC

**Introduction:** As believers, we of-

ten find ourselves amazed by the stories of the miraculous events that take place in the Bible. From the parting of the Red Sea to the raising of Lazarus, the Bible is filled with accounts of God's divine intervention in human history.

Today, we will dig deeper into one such event, known as the annunciation. The annunciation marks the beginning of the miraculous life of Jesus Christ.

*Continued next page*

*Welcome*



JOIN US AT  
CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF HOLLYWOOD

In addition to the in-person worship, we continue to stream the service on Zoom for those unable to attend in-person.

The invitation for joining the service can be found at the events page on our website at [cpchollywood.org](http://cpchollywood.org).

You can send in your prayer requests PRIOR to the service via email to [sbaroldy@gmail.com](mailto:sbaroldy@gmail.com) or text at 323-202-5078.

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood is an intentional, healing community; proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness of life offered in JESUS CHRIST.**

**“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL.”**

(ISAIAH 7:14, ESV)

Through this narrative, we will see the three components of how God moves in history. And that’s the title of this morning’s message., “How God moves in history.”

**God moves according to his Word:** This first component is this. God moves according to his word. So, let’s reread Luke 1:26-33. *“In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!’ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’”* (Luke 1:26–33, ESV)

Here is some context for our passage this morning. During the time of Jesus’ birth, the Jewish people were living under Roman rule and oppression. The concept of a virgin giving birth to a child who would save the world would have

been completely radical and unbelievable to them.

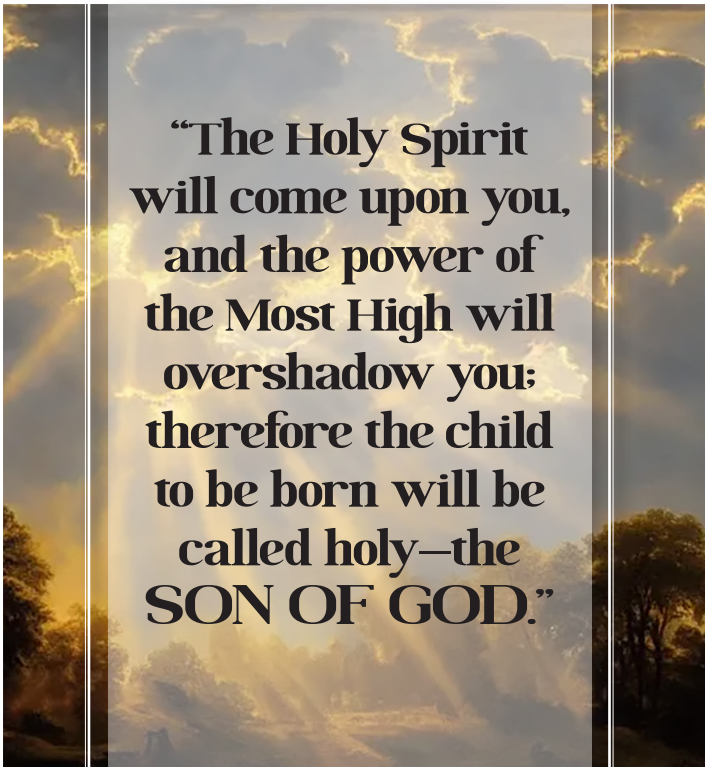
However, this passage, in Luke, fulfills the promise of God spoken through the prophets in the Old Testament. The prophets revealed God’s divine plan for salvation through the humble birth of Jesus.

A virgin giving birth to our Savior is found in Isa. 7:14. Isa. 7:14 reads, *“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”* (Isaiah 7:14, ESV)

A second prophecy about Jesus is found in Isa. 9:6-7, which reads, *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”* (Isaiah 9:6–7, ESV)

Both of these passages point to a virgin birth. Isa. 7:14 says it directly, *“the virgin shall conceive and bear a son.”* Isa. 9:6 tells us indirectly. It reads, *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.”*

*“For to us a child is born”* reveals the child will be born of a human woman. *“to us a son is given”* tells us the male



child will be given to us by God. And we are told “how” in verses 34-37, which we will look at in a moment.

The words of the angel Gabriel to Mary are in alignment with these Old Testament prophecies. This is an example of how God moves in history according to his word.

First, God speaks it through his prophets. Then, the angel announces it to Mary. And last, the Holy Spirit brings God word to completion. **(P)**

Verses 26-33 show us that God’s plan for salvation is divine. God’s plan is miraculous. Salvation through Jesus is a mystery that goes beyond human understanding and shows God’s infinite power and love for humanity. The virgin birth of Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecies and the ultimate display of God’s sovereignty and salvation for us.

And, it shows us God intervenes in human history according to his written, or spoken word. If we want God to move in our personal history, we need to know the scriptural promises God has made to us. And we need to pray according to these promises.

**God moves by the power of the Holy Spirit:** Here is the second component of how God moves in human history. God moves by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let’s reread verses 34-37. *“And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel an-*

*swered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.”*” (Luke 1:34–37, ESV)

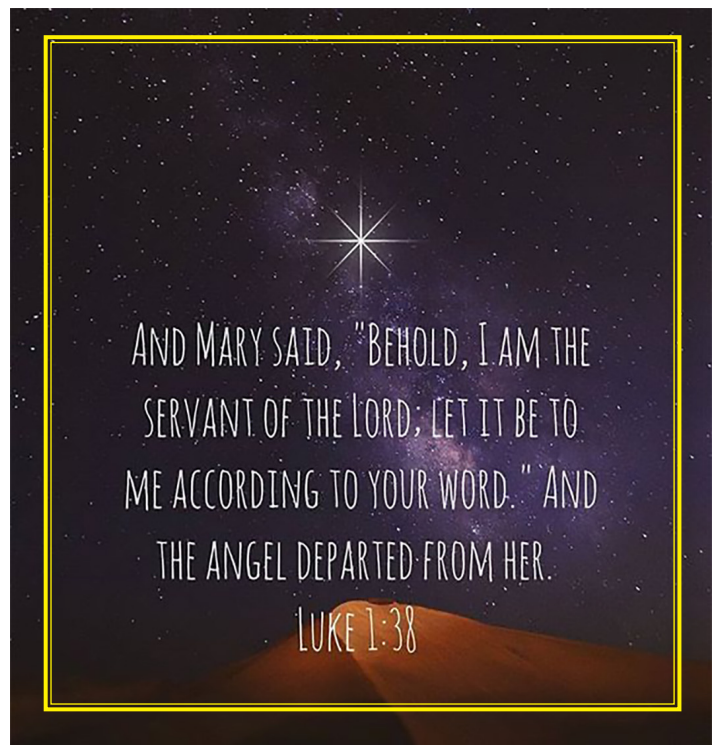
When Mary is told that she will conceive and give birth to the Son of God, she is naturally troubled and questions how this will happen since she is a virgin. The angel explains to her that it will be through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is significant as it shows that Jesus is both fully human and fully God. Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit without the involvement of a human father.

The angel also declares that Jesus will be called holy and the Son of God. This emphasizes that Jesus is without sin and reveals the divine nature of Jesus. The mention of Elizabeth’s miraculous conception in her old age is also a testament to the power of God and his ability to do the impossible.

This passage calls us to have faith in the divine plan of God for our lives. Just like Mary, we may question how things will happen. We may question things that seem impossible.

Yet, we trust in God’s sovereignty. We trust in the Holy Spirit’s power, *“For nothing will be impossible with God.”*

*Continued next page*



If God has spoken it, then the Holy Spirit will make it happen.

Jesus' birth also reminds us of the humility of God. God came to us in the form of a baby to save us. This challenges us to show the same humility in our daily lives, putting others before ourselves and serving with a willing heart.

So, to recap, when God moves in human history, God moves according to his word. And, God moves by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**God moves in response to faith:** The third component of how God moves in history is this. God moves in response to faith.

Let's reread verse 38. *"And Mary said, 'Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her."* (Luke 1:38, ESV)

This tells us three things about Mary's faith. First, Mary had a heart of obedience and trust in God.

In verse 38, we see her response to the angel's announcement of her miraculous pregnancy, *"Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word."* This statement reveals Mary's faith in God's plans for her life, even though it was not something she could fully understand or control.

Mary could have easily doubted or questioned the angel's words. She was a young, unmarried virgin, and a pregnancy would bring shame and ridicule upon her. But instead, she chose to trust in God's goodness and God's faithfulness. Mary knew that God would guide and protect her.

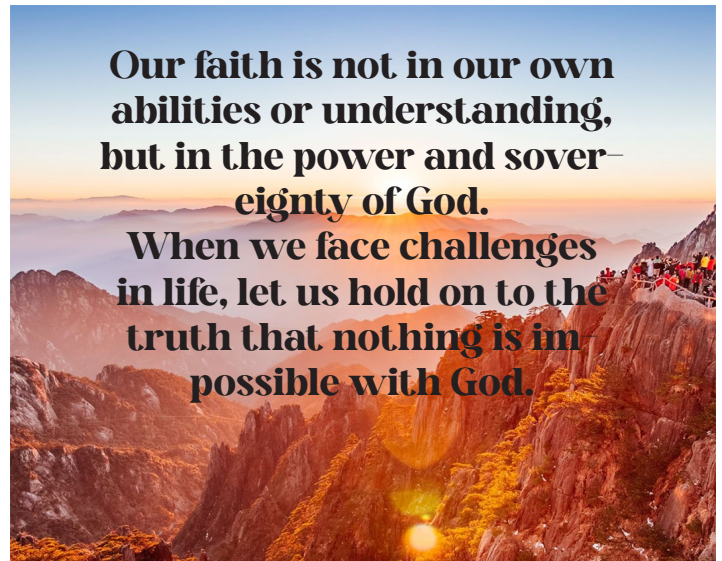
Imagine if an angel appeared to you and told you that you would carry the Son of God. Would you have the same response as Mary? Would you trust in God's plans and willingly submit to his will, even if it meant facing difficulties and challenges?

Like Mary, we, too, are called to trust in God's plans for our lives, even when they seem impossible or difficult. Let us have a heart of obedience and trust in God, knowing that he is in control and his plans are always good.

Second, Mary was willing to step out in faith, even in the face of uncertainty. When the angel told her that she would conceive as a virgin, her response was not one of doubt or hesitation, but rather a question of how it would happen.

Despite her confusion, Mary was still willing to embrace God's plan for her life, regardless of what others thought or said. She shows us that faith means stepping out of our comfort zones and trusting in God, even when we may not understand how things will unfold.

Think about a time when you had to make a decision that required stepping out in faith. How did you feel? Were you



worried or uncertain? How did your faith in God help you in that situation?

We often face situations in our lives where we are unsure of what the future holds. In those moments, let us remember Mary's faith and be willing to trust in God's plan, even when it may seem uncertain or scary.

Third, Mary's faith was grounded in scripture. In the midst of the unknown, Mary knew from scripture that God is all-powerful and nothing is too difficult for him. Her faith was not based on her own abilities or understanding, but on her trust in God's character, which she learned from scripture.

Think about the times in your life when you have witnessed God's power and strength in your own circumstances. How did it strengthen your faith in him? Let us remember that our faith is not in our own abilities or understanding, but in the power and sovereignty of God.

When we face challenges in life, let us hold on to the truth that nothing is impossible with God.

**Conclusion:** The angel's announcement to Mary is a reminder of God's divine intervention in human history to bring salvation to all who believe. It reveals God's perfect timing, God's perfect faithfulness, and God's perfect grace. These are attributes of God that we can hold onto in our own lives.

Second, it reveals to us how God moves in human history. God moves according to his word. God moves by the power of the Holy Spirit. And God moves in response to faith.

Here's another way to say it. God speaks it. We believe it. The Holy Spirit enacts it. Amen!

See you next month,  
Pastor Steve

# In Remembrance



## **JOAN JANACEK:**

Joan was 99 1/2 years old. Joan trusted GOD and her salvation through Jesus Christ. Because of that confidence, Joan was a no-nonsense woman who lived fully without fear. She had many loyal friends because she was a good friend.

## **SUEKO ARAKAWA:**

Sueko was diagnosed with cancer in October and died in December. In September she was still walking to the train station, taking the train to Beverly station and walking to church. She would not accept a ride because she "needed the exercise." Sueko was a faithful servant of the Lord and she loved to worship in community with her brothers and sisters at Christ Presbyterian Church. Sueko taught me what it means to be a servant. From a heart anchored in the love of Jesus she cared for others, noticing a need and filling it. That might be known by how she came alongside Stella in all of her projects of rummage sales and Sunday after church lunches. It might be seen by her eagle eye on Brian and Denise

on Sundays. It might be known by her wisdom and guidance as an elder of the church.

## **BRIAN ALBRITON:**

Brian was a quiet presence that will be sorely missed. He had a clever wit that made one laugh in spite of the pain he suffered. Many were privileged to be spiritually encouraged by Brian's and Denise's singing and Brian's playing of the guitar. Brian was a highly respected employee of the Braille Institute. He had a terrific memory of history and was articulate in communicating his political views.

## **CAROL NG:**

Carol was young at heart and active until she had a massive stroke mid-May, 2023. Married to Hank, Carol and Hank have two beautiful, successful daughters. Carol was part of the young people's group here at Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood. She stayed in close relationship with this church family until she went HOME to glory. Carol was kind and generous and a good friend.



**LET US PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER:**

Our church family is in grief and mourning. We have laid to rest Joan Janecek May 18, 1924 – November 27, 2023, Sueko Arakawa June 6, 1935 – December 8, 2023, Brian Albriton June 1951 – December 30, 2023 and Carol Ng December 24, 1947 – January 25, 2024.

SUSAN ROSAL was unemployed for a year for a variety of reasons. She secured a substitute teaching job in December and within a month was out sick for a month. We are praising GOD for giving Susan favor with the school district. Susan not only is able to return to work, the school has made her a permanent substitute teacher for pre-K children.

ALICE POURRAT (Pastor Steve’s granddaughter) is on a new medical protocol. Praying it is affective, and Alice would remain in remission.

ALISON PUZIO (Young Life Hollywood Director who’s ministry we support) has returned from a 3- month medical leave. She still suffers fatigue daily.

MATTY MIRANDA, Alison’s assistant, has just returned from Young Life camp in Tanzania. He went as staff support and training. Please pray for all the kids who heard the gospel, that GOD’s word would be sealed in their heart and transform their lives. Please pray for the same for the kids here in Los Angeles/Hollywood.

JANET NOZAKI is currently at Acadia Healthcare Center. She needs prayer for renewed

strength of body and mind. Her spirit is strong in the Lord.

PHILIP NOZAKI, Janet’s son is dealing with cancer. Please pray for healing and restoration.

HAZEL MCELFRISH has been having a difficult time with health issues and adjusting to her new home. Hazel continues to join us via zoom.

BARBARA KASHIWAGI suffers any movement. To move to sit up or stand is very painful. She now spends her days at California Mission Inn, in bed.

The ZEBLEY FAMILY have returned home to North Carolina. They have been deeply wounded and need spiritual and mental and relational healing.

**We always remember all those who are homebound or in care facilities:**

Yuri Sangen, Barbara Kashiwagi, Kimi Fujitani, Karen Koranye, Frank Morimoto, Janet Nozaki, Jean Sakai, Irene Mayeda caring for her mother Harumi.

Let us pray for all CPC saints Philippians 1:9-11:

<sup>9</sup>“I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, <sup>10</sup>that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup>being filled with the fruit of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of GOD.”

(Simone February 2024)



**SATURDAY, APRIL 20  
9AM -12PM**

Donated items welcomed:

- Clean
- In good working order
- Only furniture that I can pick up on my own

Items may be delivered:

On Sundays - to the Fellowship Hall  
On Weekdays - by appointment

For appointment:

Text Simone 626-476-1414

# FINANCIAL REPORT

**DECEMBER  
2023**



	<u>DEC. 2023</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Receipts	\$ 33,680	\$ 164,660
Disbursements	\$ 15,761	\$ 162,631
Increase (Deficit)	\$ 17,918	\$ 2,029

The Session and I would like to thank the church community for their generosity. Because of you, we ended the year with a small surplus. *Pastor Steve*

## *Gifts & Offering*



*We are grateful for your continued generosity in supporting our ministry.*

*Please consider sending a gift or donation to:*

**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood  
4011 Clinton Street, Los Angeles, CA 90004**

*“Per a suggestion from a reader, we are looking into adding a payment link to our newsletter to make it easier to contribute.*

HOW  
CAN WE  
*pray*  
FOR  
YOU?



If you have prayer requests, you can send them via email or text PRIOR to our service each Sunday.

My email is sbaroldy@gmail.com.

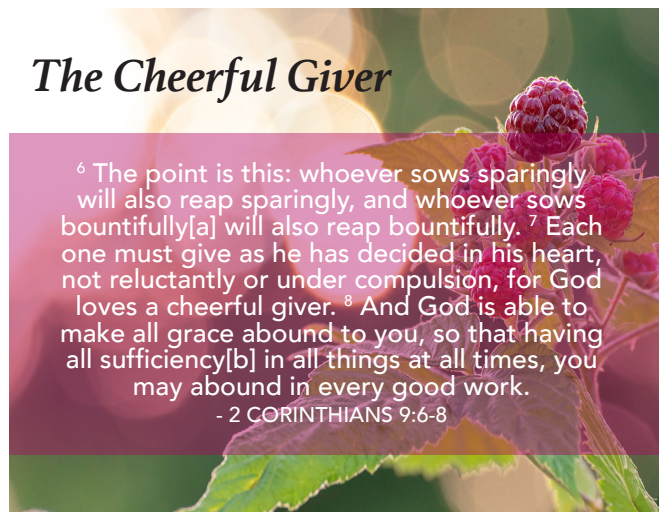
You can text me at

323-202-5078.

## *The Cheerful Giver*

<sup>6</sup> The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully[a] will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup> Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency[b] in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

- 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-8



# CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOLLYWOOD



**SUNDAYS at 11:00 A.M.  
IN-PERSON OR ON ZOOM**

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://zoom.us/j/384758031?pwd=ZnEySjBjL1VkUmhiTWRCREdmZVhJZz09>

Meeting ID: 384 758 031  
Password: 351955  
One tap mobile  
+16699006833,,384758031# US (San Jose)  
+13462487799,,384758031# US (Houston)

*"Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood is an intentional healing community; proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness of life offered by Jesus Christ."*

DATED MATERIAL

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